



GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AUSTRALIA

PARISH OF THE ANNUNCIATION OF OUR LADY, “EVANGELISMOS”

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YOUR FAITH HAS MADE YOU WELL

**EPISTLE The Reading is from St Paul’s Letter to the Ephesians
[2:14-22]**

For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that he might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father. Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

EXPLANATION:

Through the “**Blood of Christ**”, the Gentiles “**who were once far off**” (“without God”) have become “**near**”, united to the Church of Christ. The new humanity, the new creation that flows from sacramental union with Christ, is offered to all, whether Jew or Gentile. Thus His Cross is said to have **destroyed the dividing middle wall** of the enmity that from time immemorial divided Jew from Gentile. Now that this wall is **broken down**, both Gentiles and Jews are reconciled and one in Christ. Man’s brokenness was twofold- man was separated from man (Gentile from Jew), and man was separated from God. The healing is likewise twofold: the creation of a unified humanity, the Church, and the raising of this unified humanity to God. The Incarnation of the Son did the former; His death and Resurrection did the latter, the whole Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, did it together. **(2:14)** Jesus has “**abolished in His flesh**” the hostility and division of Jew and Gentile by his death on the Cross. The two groups have been made into “**one new man**”, a “new creation”. **(2:15-16)** For the Mosaic Law which made them different has now been rendered irrelevant to salvation. Both now enjoy access to God the Father in one and the same **Spirit**; finding forgiveness through one and the same body sacrificed on the Cross. Thus they find themselves reconciled in that Body, the **enmity** between them having been killed (**put to death**) through the Cross. Christ is the **peace** between all men. **(2:17-18)** The Church, humanity unified and renewed through union with the incarnate Son of God, is built upon the foundation of Jesus Christ and the Apostles and prophets. **(2:19-20)** From this foundation came the Scriptures and all doctrine. By participating in the Sacraments of the Church and in the Divine Liturgy we become a

Eucharistic assembly – **in one Spirit**. All of our approach to God – at all times – is accomplished in the Spirit. **(2:21-22)**

GOSPEL The Reading is from St Luke [18:35-43]

Then it happened, as He was coming near Jericho, that a certain blind man sat by the road begging. And hearing a multitude passing by, he asked what it meant. So they told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by. And he cried out, saying, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!” Then those who went before warned him that he should be quiet; but he cried out all the more, “Son of David, have mercy on me!” So Jesus stood still and commanded him to be brought to Him. And when he had come near, He asked Him, saying, “*What do you want Me to do for you?*” He said, “Lord, that I may receive my sight.” Then Jesus said to him, “*Receive your sight; your faith has made you well.*” And immediately he received his sight, and followed Him, glorifying God. And all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God.

EXPLANATION:

A blind man sat by the road begging, and hearing the commotion asked what was going on? They told him, “**Jesus of Nazareth is passing by**”. And believing that Christ is the seed of David cried out, “**Son of David, have mercy on me!**” The bystanders tried to stop him; they rebuked him, **but he cried out all the more**. He was persistent in his quest. And Jesus, hearing the cry of human sorrow stopped and healed him. The Lord said, “**Your faith has made you whole**”. For you have believed with faith that I am the Son of David, the Christ, Who is now revealed, and you have shown such zeal that you did not keep silent even when rebuked. Similarly Jesus hears all our prayers when we ask Him with faith.

If the blind man had not prayed with faith, Jesus would have passed him by. How many times has Jesus passed us by because we did not ask Him to stop? How many needs are there in our lives that are not met simply because we have not fallen on our knees in humility and not prayed? But Jesus will not give us what we ask for if we do not make a good request. That is, if it is not good or profitable for our soul. The Blind man saw not only the light of day, but also the light of life – his spiritual sight. When we embrace Christ as our Lord and Saviour, He enables us to see things we never saw before. Such sight changes a man's life. He lives no longer for the passing things of this world, but for the things that endure, that last unto eternity. Such sight requires a man to walk away from his beggar's mat into the discipleship of Christ, away from prejudice into life of love and brotherhood, away from sin to a new life in Christ. When the blind beggar received his sight, **"he followed Jesus"**. He had enough of darkness. Now he would live in the presence of Him who was and is and will ever be **"the light of the world"**. Jesus continually knocks on the door of our hearts. He reveals Himself in the Bible. He speaks to us through the Church. He offers Himself to us through the Sacraments. He is always just a prayer away from us. But we remain inactive and He passes by unheeded. We fail to respond, to seize the opportunity that would have given us sight, light, happiness, joy and fulfilment beyond our highest expectation, leading on to eternal life. To miss Christ is to miss all. To gain Christ is to gain all. If you do not open the door of your heart you will shut Him out with your indifference and lose life's greatest opportunity to invite Christ into your life. **(18:35-43)**